



2022-23 | Russell Sage College

# Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan Progress Report | YEAR 1 OF 3

# Priorities

## Priority 1

Growing our leadership on inclusive teaching and scholarship in relation to Equity, Inclusion and Diversity.

## Priority 2

Increasing access and success for under-represented and marginalized populations.

## Priority 3

Continuously build upon a campus climate where everyone feels welcome, supported, included, and valued.

## Priority 4

Attract, recruit, support and develop a diverse community inclusive of all students faculty, and staff.

## Priority 5

Develop an institutional infrastructure to drive change.



# A Letter from President Ames



The attached report details the vitality of community activities conducted in support of our commitment to embrace “diversity, equity, and inclusion as essential components of a rich intellectual and cultural environment in which all members are given the opportunity to reach their full potential as active participants in our local and global society.” It represents a successful year of progress on our strategic plan led by Geoff Miller, our Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, and supported by the DEI Coalition.

More importantly, the work has been welcomed and supported across the campus and across our multiple constituencies. Creating a more equitable and just culture is serious and wide-ranging work, but it can also be fulfilling and joyous.

Russell Sage College’s deepening investment in promoting a culture that welcomes everyone comes at an important time in which DEI efforts have come under fire. In signing a bill to ban funding of DEI efforts in public universities in Florida, Governor Ron DeSantis characterized DEI as “discrimination, exclusion and indoctrination.” That’s an unfortunate and uninformed caricature that underscores the need for good information about the positive contributions of DEI work in promoting a healthier culture for everyone.

In that vein, we were proud to host honorary degree recipient Dr. Eddie S. Glaude, Jr. as speaker at Russell Sage College’s 2023 commencement ceremony. Glaude is the chair of African American Studies at Princeton and one of the most prominent writers and commentators on race in America. In his work, he stresses the urgency of confronting the inequities and prejudices ingrained in our history and our present. In his address to graduates, he urged them not to passively accept the world as it is but to dare to confront injustice and envision a better world.

Our work at Russell Sage proceeds in the same spirit, and we are committed to building community understanding of, support for, and participation in DEI efforts. By working with our different constituencies—students, faculty and staff—we are collaborating, not indoctrinating, and including, not excluding. I’m gratified by the spirit I see on the Sage campuses and the work that has been accomplished. And I am optimistic about what the future holds for bringing us closer to achieving our vision of a “campus that supports an optimal learning and working environment for all students, alumni, faculty, administrators, and staff.”

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Ames".

Christopher Ames  
President, Russell Sage College



# A Letter from Director Miller



Currently, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) is a term that has gained more attention and urgency in recent years due to increased awareness of systemic biases and discrimination faced by marginalized communities. Many organizations and institutions have implemented DEI initiatives to address these issues and promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

At Russell Sage College, DEI refers to the principles of promoting diversity, ensuring equity, and creating an inclusive environment in many aspects of life at Sage, such as in the classrooms and libraries, in the dorms, on the fields, through the offices, and in social settings. Our vision is one that embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion as essential components of a rich intellectual and cultural environment in which all members are given the opportunity to reach their full potential as active participants in our local and global society.

The good progress and work reported in this document you are about to experience comes on the shoulders of our previous director Barbara Cockfield. In her tenure, Barbara was able to mobilize the Sage community and develop a strategic plan that carefully detailed the steps necessary to help Sage be a place for all people. All year long, the DEI Coalition worked to implement the first year of our 3-year strategic plan. It is with great pleasure that I share the accomplishments of the plan with you.

DEI can still be polarizing in 2023, as some individuals and groups may perceive it as an attack on their beliefs or a form of discrimination. We at Russell Sage College understand that there may be disagreements on the best approaches to achieve DEI, but we are committed to creating brave spaces built on respect which will allow differences to be valued while promoting a more just and equitable world.

In Unity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoff'.

Geoff Miller

*he/him*

Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

# THE DEI COALITION

## RSC DEI Vision Statement

Russell Sage College embraces diversity, equity, and inclusion as essential components of a rich intellectual and cultural environment in which all members are given the opportunity to reach their full potential as active participants in our local and global society.

We realize that the work of diversity, equity, and inclusion is an evolution that moves us towards our aspirations of a culturally inclusive community. The understanding we gain, as we continually assess our institution, will create informed and intentional transformation.

Russell Sage College is committed to developing policies and programs to create a campus that supports an optimal learning and working environment for all students, alumnae/i, faculty, administrators, and staff.



**Andrea Rehn**  
*she/her*  
Undergraduate Dean  
and Dean, School of  
Arts & Sciences



**Ray Rodriguez**  
*he/him*  
Student Success Advisor



**Rebecca Palmer**  
*she/they*  
Student Success Advisor



**Gabrielle Vaisey**  
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Assistant Director of  
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**Ali Schaeffing**  
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Director of Service  
Learning and Community  
Engagement & Assistant  
Professor of Geography



**Dan Hulseapple**  
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Associate Director of  
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**Erica Li**  
*she/her*  
Associate Athletic Director,  
Head Softball Coach



**Emily Obuya**  
*she/her*  
Associate Professor of  
Biology and Health Sciences  
and Health Sciences  
Program Director



**Stacey Gonzalez**  
*she/her*  
Dean of Students, Troy



**Morgan Milhollen-Dukes**  
*they/she*  
Assistant Director of  
Residence Life, Troy



**Miguel Mercedes**  
*he/him*  
Assistant Director of  
Residence Life, Albany



**Sara Schuman**  
*she/her*  
Coordinator, General Education Core



**Cait York**  
*she/her*  
Director of Accessibility Services



**Elizabeth Nielsen**  
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**Daniel Merges**  
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Clinical Coordinator and Licensed  
Mental Health Counselor



**Grace Giancola**  
*she/her*  
Director of Residence Life



**Leah Rico**  
*she/her*  
Assistant Professor and  
Program Director,  
Graphic + Media Design



**Mikaela Cortese, Maleek Green,  
Jacqueline Hilliard**  
DEI Student Graphic Designers



# Priority 1

Supporting faculty with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion initiatives is crucial for creating a more inclusive and equitable environment in academic institutions.

**Here are some ways the Office of DEI worked with faculty:**



Dr. Roy Kaplan visited to engage faculty with his program, *Keys to Creating Community Through Dialogue*, which helped faculty think about how they facilitate conversation in their classes.



The Pride Center of the Capital District provided training that raised topics important for faculty to be mindful of and respectful of the diversity and unique needs of LGBTQIA+ students, and to create an inclusive environment that supports their academic and personal growth.



*Defying Deficit Mindedness*, presented by the Office of DEI at J-College, asked the Sage community to participate in conversations and activities designed to enhance their understanding of equity-mindedness, particularly when it pertains to the characteristics of race consciousness, and utilize concepts of equity-mindedness to promote an inclusive environment.

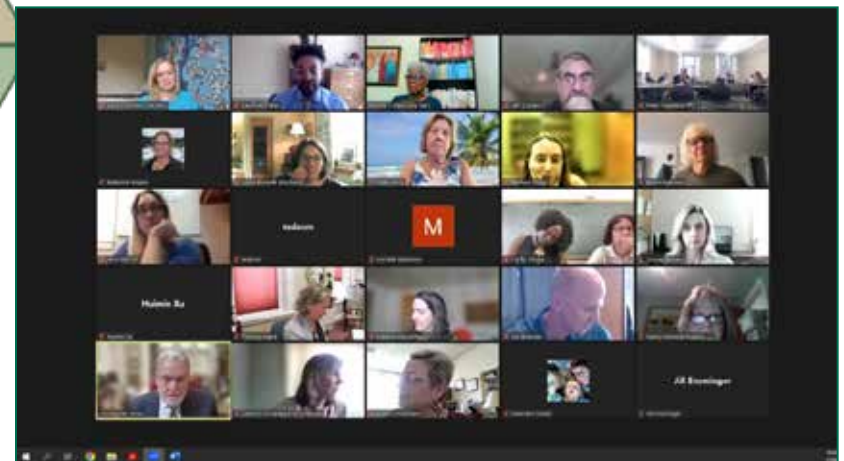
“Dr. Allen has such a great way of presenting information and hearing and responding to her audience. I loved the presentation and hope she can return to continue to engage us with our vital DEI work.” and “Sessions like these will continue to broaden everyone's awareness of DEI and how to help all stakeholders at RSC—from students through all departments and employees—to realize the value of our differences and our sameness as well.”

*Participant feedback*

“I thought the discussion was helpful. I think more training regarding equity is needed. I am looking forward to our smaller meetings at the departmental level. I would also like to see one specific to transgender and how as a college we are being supportive and inclusive. Thank you again for providing these workshops.”

*Participant feedback*

Dr. Brenda J. Allen joined us for a session about valuing and appreciating differences to ultimately build a more just society. Dr. Allen is the author of the recently published 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of the book, *Difference Matters: Communicating Social Identity*, a resource currently being utilized to support teaching in the General Education Core.







Dr. Mark Montgomery facilitated a workshop to help faculty identify and operationalize opportunities for equity in their classes and develop a statement to incorporate into their written documents shared with students.



Supported by the Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL), the office of DEI and the General Education Core held a 7-week *Community Faculty Group: Exploring Intercultural Perspectives & Social Identity*, which convened faculty to discuss topics about identity and how they influence our delivery of curriculum.



Service learning projects can engage students with diverse communities and provide opportunities to learn about different cultures and perspectives. Service learning can also help students understand and address social inequalities and injustices that provide opportunities to develop skills for advocacy and social change. At this year's RSC 301 Showcase, students presented their work with the following partners:

#### **OUR SERVICE LEARNING PARTNERS**

Big Brothers, Big Sisters  
Connect Center for Youth  
Cornell Cooperative Extension  
Elevate Club at Impact Athletic Center  
Boys and Girls Club of the Capital Area  
Girl Scouts of Northeast NY  
Hudson Youth Center  
RSC Intercultural Cafes, Albany & Troy  
Literacy Volunteers of Rensselaer County  
Redemption Christian Academy  
Translating for Humanity  
The United Way of the Greater Capital Region  
Wildwood Programs







Inaugural Faculty Fellow Dr. Emily Obuya was appointed in 2022 to assist in the implementation of the DEI strategic plan while supporting faculty, departments, and programs as they foster inclusive teaching and learning practices.



All year long the faculty fellow conducted their work as a study which uses data inquiry and self-reflection tools to empower faculty to become equity-minded practitioners who have the critical consciousness, will and ability to address equity and combat institutional racism. We met with every department and have captured information that will inform how we scale and sustain the formal and informal opportunities designed to grow our understanding that will benefit all students.





# Priority 2

Increasing access and success for under-represented and marginalized populations.

Increasing access and success for under-represented and marginalized students in college is an important issue, as it can help to promote social mobility, while also reducing disparities in opportunity and achieving outcomes. By implementing the following strategies, RSC will help to support access and success for under-represented and marginalized populations.

The Pride Center of the Capital Region provided an interactive workshop for student leaders on allyship. We believe that student leaders have the power to make positive change by creating inclusive environments where everyone feels valued and respected.



States, like Florida, Texas, Ohio, etc., have been introducing legislation, like “Don’t Say Gay” bills, that target the LGBTQIA+ community as a scapegoat to avoid the real problems facing real people. The Ernest O. Reaugh Advised Fund for LGBTQIA+ Advocacy, managed by the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, provides funding for projects and programs that advocate for the rights of the LGBTQIA+ community. As a recipient of this award, RSC’s student group, The Queer Collective, participated in a series of educational activities, facilitated by the Pride Center of the Capital Region, that helped students discover, focus, and use their advocacy to make change.



### **About Queer Collective**

The Queer Collective (QC) is a student-run organization that creates a safe space for individuals who identify or are allied with the LGBTQIA+ community. Safe spaces are necessary for

marginalized communities, especially for those who are fighting oppression on multiple fronts. An aspect of the QC is that it makes time for members to get together and talk about their experiences, ask for guidance, and/or process current world problems then mobilize to address the many issues plaguing our community.





Social and digital media campaigns can be an effective way to highlight and celebrate communities of color. For Black Heritage Month, RSC featured its Black students, faculty and staff who demonstrate excellence all year long through a series of social media posts and on its digital e-boards. Next year, each heritage month celebration will feature members of the RSC community.

- ◆ 23% of all RSC Instagram followers reached and an average of 7% engaged
- ◆ 8% of all RSC Facebook audience reached with an average of 2.8% reaction rate





Hosting events on campus that center DEI as a way to connect with peers and learn is part of the experiential learning process RSC students receive. Through the celebration of heritage months, Sage demonstrates its commitment to learning about and honoring the diverse cultural backgrounds and identities of each other. Heritage months are dedicated to recognizing the contributions and achievements of various ethnic, racial, and cultural groups.

### **HISPANIC HERITAGE MONTH (SEPTEMBER 15–OCTOBER 15)**

#### **Young LatinX Leaders in Politics**

A new wave of young Hispanics who are eager to represent their communities in the political arena is emerging and that is why we invited Albany Common Council person Gabriella A. Romero to come speak about working as an elected official and share her current work fueled by her motivations to serve the public.

“ I loved the way that Gabriella was very open about her job and what she does for a living. This allowed all of us to get an insight on what she does and how successful she has become. I also really liked that she opened the floor to students with any questions that they may have concerns about certain topics and gave them information and ways go about voicing their opinion to the community. ”

*Student reflection*







## What does LatinX Mean?

Many have wondered and even debated the terminology used both for the name of Hispanic Heritage Month and of the over 62 million people in the United States that racially and/or ethnically identify as a member of the community. Schenectady Community Ministry Executive Director Amaury Tañón-Santos, D-Min, joined RSC201 Exploring Intercultural Perspectives for a conversation that challenges the question "What box should I put you in?"

(( I thought the history behind the word 'Latinx' was interesting as well as how Spain is sort of considered the 'mother' even to this day. ))

*Student reflection*







## INDIGENOUS PEOPLES HERITAGE MONTH (NOVEMBER)

### Introduction to the Iroquois

Iroquois educator Brenda LaForme introduced students to her culture, history and tradition, including exploration of the Clan system and the formation of the Iroquois Confederacy—the oldest operating democracy in human history.

“The presentation was very interesting to me. I did not know that the Iroquois prefer to go by a different name. One question I had was what are today’s standards of removing Native American names from schools and teams in New York different from how the British were erasing Native American history. If we remove all of their culture from our society, are we fixing a problem or are we making an even worse one by white washing our lives and the world our children are growing up in. Without acknowledging the history and the atrocities committed against the Native people of our country, how will we know how to better ourselves in the future?”

*Student reflection*



### Decolonizing Museums and Historical Societies

Samantha Hall-Saladino '09, Executive Director at the Fulton County Historical Society in Groversville was back on campus and talked to students about the need for museums and historical societies to ensure diversity, equity, and inclusion exists in their exhibits, programming, published materials, and policies.







### Traditional Native Meal Preparation Demonstration

Assistant Director of Residence Life in Troy and Nutrition Graduate Student Morgan Milhollen-Dukes led a cooking demonstration of Indigenous cuisine. As one of the oldest cuisines, one both rich in flavor and diverse in origin, the Native Americans developed these meals long before contact with any Europeans.

“ When she talked about how the mothers and women were the “gatherers” and the people who grew the food (beans, corn, and squash mostly) it reminded me of our conversations of sexism. How women are “supposed” to be in the kitchen and cook and clean for the family and husbands. What stuck out to me though, was when she said when married, the men live with the woman’s clan and leave theirs—which is pretty interesting.”

*Student reflection*



**Priority 2**

## BLACK HERITAGE MONTH (FEBRUARY)

### Intro to Chicago Style Steppin'

Co-sponsored with Thrive@Sage and led by Mind Body Soul Studio dance instructors Brian "Albany's Step-Daddy" Bolton and Yvonne Bolton, this event introduced Chicago Steppin' as an improvisational form of partner dancing with its roots in such dance styles as the Chicago Bop, the Lindy Hop and Western Swing. This smooth and sophisticated art form is supported by soul, jazz, and r&b music.







## Black Resistance

Activist, author, and advocate Dr. Alice P. Green shared her life's work leading the Center for Law and Justice and its impact on criminal justice and political reform. Building on the Black History Month 2023 theme, "Black Resistance," Dr. Green discussed how African Americans have resisted historic and ongoing oppression, in all forms, including racial terrorism, systemic discrimination, and police violence against people of color.

“I was very shocked to learn that black workers earn 30% less than white workers on average. I think everything that was said was important. I learned a lot of new terms that I have never heard before. I am glad I went to the presentation.”

*Student reflection*



## The Power of the Black Dollar

CEO of the Black Chamber of Commerce, Deshanna Wiggins, and CEO of Business for Good Foundation and Founder and Chief Development Officer of 4<sup>th</sup> Family, Jahkeen Hoke, joined students and the RSC community to discuss how we all can circulate our dollars to help to narrow the racial wealth gap.



**Priority 2**





## An Afrofuturistic Experience

Jordan Taylor Hill & Friends returned to present *An Afrofuturistic Experience*. Students experienced a series of traditional drumming and dance from West Africa, spoken word, and storytelling. The show concluded with dancing in Bush Memorial!







“ I learned what Iran really looks like. Along with that kids are dying for protesting their rights and speaking up is just sickening. But I really enjoyed this and felt like I learned so much. ”

*Student reflection*

### **Disbound**

Sponsored by the Sage Libraries and the English, Writing & Culture Program, and in collaboration with The Rev & Creativity Unleashed, RSC Alumna Hajar Hussain debuted her poetry *Disbound*. As a poet and translator from Kabul living in Saratoga Springs where she is a Visiting Assistant Professor of English at Skidmore College, Hussain's poems in *Disbound* grapple with the English language as it conforms to the pressures of abandonment.



## **MIDDLE EASTERN AND NORTH AFRICAN (MENA) HERITAGE MONTH (APRIL)**

### **Our Future is in the Hands of the Youth**

Filmmaker Elahe Gol Pari is no stranger to revolution. Growing up in Tehran, she was just 10 years old when the Islamic Revolution took place. Decades later, while visiting her hometown, she witnessed what she hopes is the start of a different kind of sea change led by young people. She shared the stories of young people in Tehran with people at Sage.





### Iftar Party

Sage held its first Iftar Party in the Spirituality Center where folks enjoyed a variety of cuisines, learned more about the Muslim faith, and participated in activities that included henna art, traditional Arab music, and dancing.

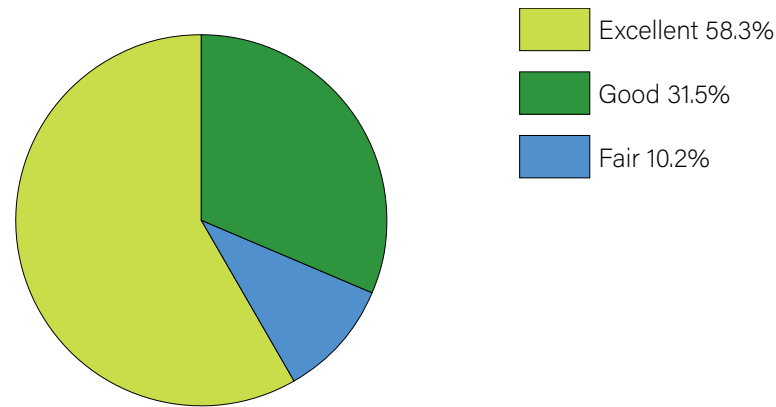




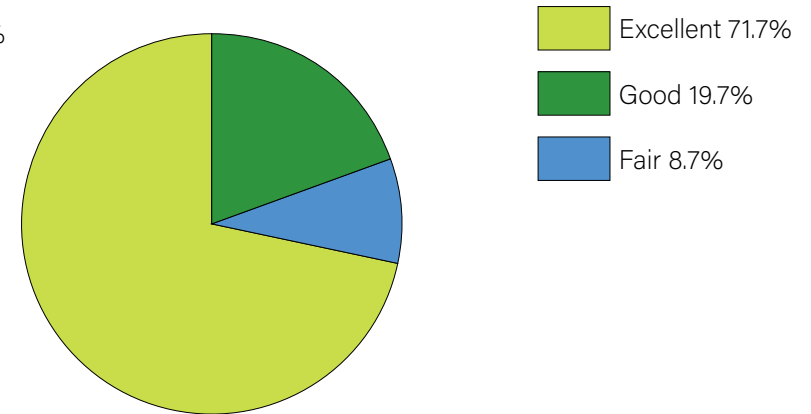
## Critical Conversation Survey Results

Following each program, students are asked to complete a survey that will assess the quality of its offerings. Of the nearly 130 responses received by participants, all question areas achieved a "good" or higher rating 80% or more each time.

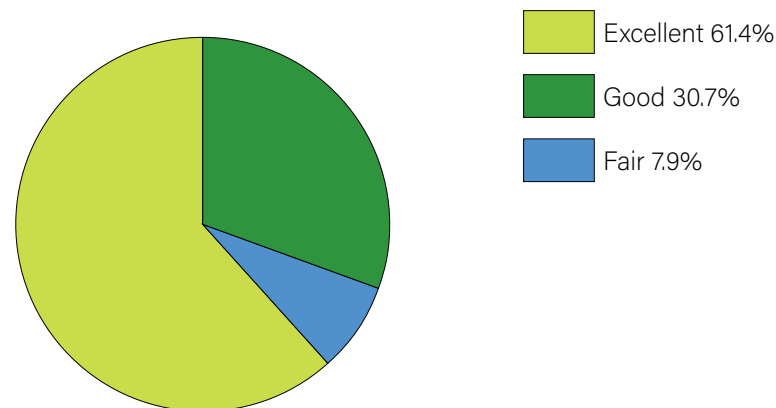
How would you rate the overall experience of this program?



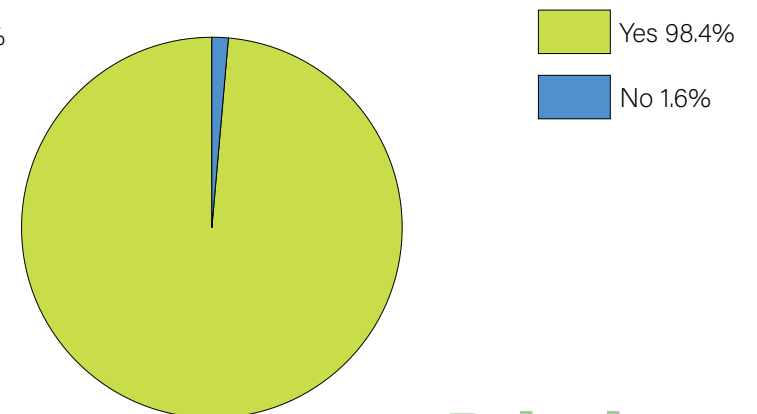
How would you rate your satisfaction with the speakers?



How would you rate the quality of the content?



Did you learn something new?



# Priority 3

Continuously build upon a campus climate where everyone feels welcome, supported, included, and valued.

Building a welcoming, supportive, inclusive, and valued campus climate is an ongoing process that requires commitment from everyone. The efforts below demonstrate the actions necessary for creating a positive and productive learning and working environment.

The DEI Coalition took part in several events that were designed to expand their understanding of DEI so that they can be informed DEI advocates in their areas. As the front-line champions of the DEI Strategic Plan, DEI Coalition members are eager to drive change at Russell Sage College. All year long, members participated in internal and external opportunities to hone their skills and invested in their ability to be ambassadors for DEI.



Carlos M. Cotto, Jr., Ed.D. is the Assistant Superintendent of Innovation, Equity and Engagement for Schenectady City School District. He met with the coalition to share his work with young people and how we can develop inclusive practices as students transition from secondary schools to higher education.



DEI Coalition members participated in three training sessions sponsored by the Capital Region Chamber of Commerce:

**1 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Summit 2022:**

A sold-out event that provided attendees an opportunity to learn new approaches and best practices to help elevate an organization's diversity, equity and inclusion strategies.

**2 Essential Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Concepts:**

*Embarking on Your DEI Journey:* This session provided an introduction to some of the foundational topics and considerations important to starting a DEI journey. Participants were presented with tools and resources that can aid in beginning to cultivate a more inclusive climate in the workplace.

**3 Understanding Unconscious Bias—Tips to Raise Awareness and Do Better:**

This session discussed the topic of unconscious bias, what it is, and how it impacts our day-to-day interactions.





Sage Alumna and Director for Equity and Inclusion Initiatives for the Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, Daquetta Jones, was back on campus to share with the DEI Coalition her insights, experience and advice to demonstrate equity at all levels in an organization.



**This academic year there have been 1,698 Page Views and 800 Unique Users at an average of 0:41 seconds spent on page.**

A website presence relating to DEI is an effective way to promote Sage's commitment to creating a more inclusive and diverse educational and workplace setting, while also signaling to alumni, prospective families, friends, and supporters that we have a vision for institutional DEI and abide by a set of values that strive to lift up all people.

***Website updated with links to reporting processes:***

<https://www.sage.edu/about/community-resources/diversity-equity-inclusion/>

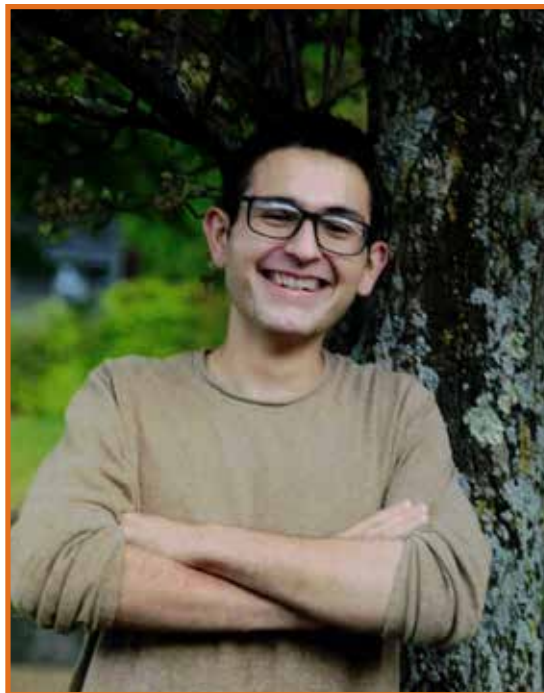




### ***Social Justice Scholars***

The Russell Sage College Social Justice Scholars (SJS) program will prepare future activists for change through citizenry, scholarship,

and activism. Working toward a more just and equitable society, SJS examines the inequities and injustices that plague our world and seeks to find ways to remove these barriers. In doing so, SJS are advocates on campus for marginalized and oppressed voices; equipping students with tools to become change agents within RSC, the community, and the world.



Douglas Sato is a second-year History Childhood Education major who holds several leadership roles at Sage, including President of Democracy Matters, Secretary of the Queer Collective, and Resident Assistant. This summer, Doug will study abroad and attend the prestigious arts, activism, and social justice summer school at the University of Bristol.



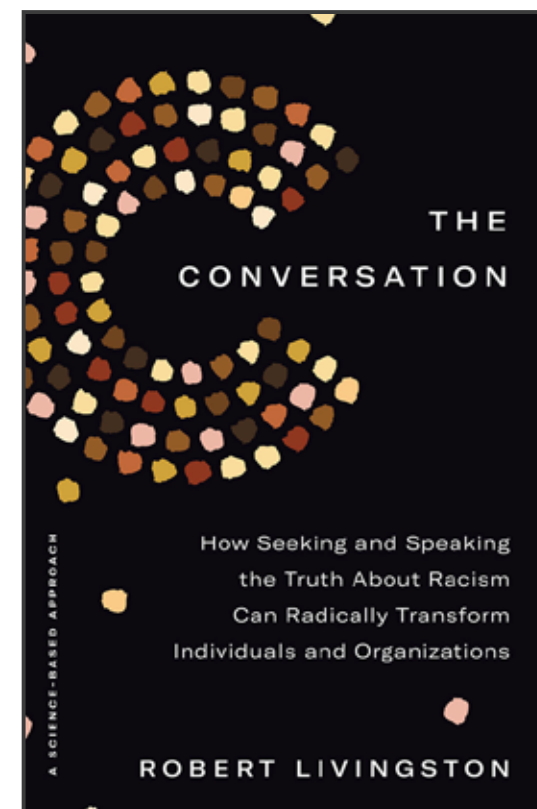
Saadé White is a third-year Public Health major and Social Entrepreneur who advocates for climate justice as President of the Sustainability Club. Whether Saadé is organizing a recycling drive around move out day in the dorms or drafting policies at the Capitol as a NYS Senate and Assembly intern, Saadé is a force for good.



On a frigid cold day in February, the New York State Museum opened their doors to our SJS's for an exclusive tour of their archives. The stories hidden away tell a deeper story that the SJS's will carry on with them. Archives explored were Indigenous people artifacts, early LGBTQIA+ advocacy literature, and remains of shackles and chains from an escaped slave looking for freedom.







The SJS presented their research at Undergraduate Research Day. Inspired by Dr. Robert Livingston's book *The Conversation: How Seeking and Speaking the Truth about Racism can Radically Transform Individuals and Organizations*, SJS provided data informed recommendations to developing places for students to have conversations that are supportive, brave spaces designed to promote understanding and belongingness. The SJS are excited about seeing their recommendations realized next year!

# Priority 4

Attract, recruit, support and develop a diverse community inclusive of all students, faculty, and staff.

Creating a diverse and inclusive community that encompasses faculty, staff, undergraduate students, and graduate students requires a comprehensive and layered approach that addresses various stages of the recruitment, support, and development process. Sustaining a diverse and inclusive community requires ongoing commitment, evaluation, and adaptation. The effectiveness of strategies and initiatives in Priority Four seeks to foster an environment that is truly welcoming, supportive, and inclusive for all.

Human Resources (HR) and DEI are interconnected areas within the college that play vital roles in fostering a diverse and inclusive work setting. One of the primary objectives of this priority is to support Sage's workforce and ensure that the college attracts, develops, and retains talented individuals who are also representative of the student population served. Following a national search, the HR Director Search Committee concluded its search and hired a new director who began on May 8, 2023. With the new director on board, we look forward to making progress in the 2023-24 academic year on this priority.





## OMOTOLANI ELUMADE

Tolani is an experienced HR policy and project management professional. She holds a BA in art history from Fisk University, Master of Professional Studies in criminal justice from St. John's University, and an Executive Master in public administration from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University. Tolani was most recently the Human Resources Director and Interim Executive Director of the Commission on Human Rights for the City of Albany. During her tenure with the City, Tolani created critical human resources procedures and led innovative recruitment and retention efforts to stimulate and support the City's workforce. Additionally, she has worked as a special projects manager for the NYC Department of Correction where she worked on various initiatives, including EEO compliance, diversity, inclusion, equity, recruitment and leadership development, security response, and other projects under the Anti-Violence Reform Agenda, a landmark criminal justice reform strategy aimed at reducing violence and improving the quality of life for incarcerated individuals and officers.



Last year, faculty and staff began training as Search Advocates. These members are trained to identify and eliminate bias risks at all stages of the hiring process. By learning principles and strategies to advance Sage's strategic diversity goals, equal opportunity principles,

and diversity and inclusion values to enhance the integrity and effectiveness of the search and selection process. 10 Sage faculty and staff members have completed this 4-session series of the training.

# Priority 5

Develop an institutional infrastructure to drive change.

Securing resources for DEI initiatives is an ongoing process and takes many stakeholders. Key partnerships contribute to building capacity which support and foster inclusivity. This year, the Office of DEI partnered with areas of the college that sought to increase access and accessibility.

The Mother Cabrini Health Foundation has awarded a one-year grant to Russell Sage College's Department of Nursing for a partnership to encourage high school students interested in nursing careers.







The *I Can Achieve a Degree in Nursing* program, or ICAN, will create a collaborative community mentorship model for underserved youth to achieve a bachelor's degree in nursing and employment as a registered nurse. The program will address the nationwide nursing shortage and focus on preparing a diverse workforce to serve underrepresented communities with accessible quality health care. ICAN will focus on the Black, Indigenous and People of Color communities in New York's Capital Region. Sage will work with Albany Medical Center, the Black Nurses Coalition and Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls.

This program will recruit and support students from target populations through high school partnerships; match high school students with professional nursing mentors from diverse backgrounds; provide academic support to guide students through high school and a nursing degree; motivate and guide underrepresented and underserved minorities into professional nursing careers; and create meaningful employment and professional experiences in diverse health care settings.







Whiteman Osterman & Hanna, LLC Attorney Monica Lenahan presented to faculty and staff on the *Americans with Disabilities Act in Higher Education*, which aims to increase the knowledge of faculty, staff, and administrators about the ADA and Section 504. Designed to provide the latest information on ADA and Section 504 regulations and guidelines, implementation strategies, and best practices for participants to understand the important responsibility of all Sage community members to eliminate discrimination against students with disabilities.



## Priority 1: Growing our leadership on inclusive teaching and scholarship in relation to Equity, Inclusion and Diversity.

Goal	Strategy	Partner Office(s)	Year 1 Measure	Results/Updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Holding/Further Consideration
<b>1) Implement Universal Design for Learning</b>	1) Identify and develop UDL resources for faculty and offer introductory UDL training.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provost</li> <li>Library</li> <li>CTL</li> </ul>	Identify and compile a list of UDL resources and offer intro to UDL training by year 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ UDL presenters identified</li> <li>○ Fall 2023 incorporate a UDL resources on DEI webpage</li> </ul>	
<b>2) Support inclusive teaching, scholarship, and professional development</b>	1) Provide opportunities for faculty to deepen their knowledge of DEI through workshops and access to resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provost</li> <li>Library</li> <li>CTL</li> </ul>	Provide trainings, meetings, newsletters, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 5 faculty trainings completed to date</li> <li>✓ Completed 7-week Exploring Intercultural Perspectives &amp; Social Identity learning community with a cohort of 11 faculty members</li> <li>✓ Participated in CTL "Navigating Difficult Moments in Teaching" on 2.23.23</li> </ul>	
<b>3) Provide opportunities for Russell Sage College students to see their lives reflected in curriculum</b>	1) Incorporate a diverse range of representative texts, speakers, and other relevant materials to teaching.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provost</li> <li>Gen-Ed</li> <li>Undergrad Dean</li> <li>CTL</li> </ul>	Meet with each department to begin thinking about equity in their current curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Met with all department chairs Fall 2022</li> <li>✓ Met with every department Spring 2023</li> </ul>	
	2) Departments to develop and share public-facing commitments to DEI.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provost</li> <li>CTL</li> <li>Communications</li> </ul>	Departments will have a positive increase to responding that there is equity found in their curriculum and department key documents from 2023 to 2025.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 29 faculty members participated in a workshop to develop an equity statement for their syllabi and other key documents.</li> </ul>	
	3) Promote experiential learning that exposes students to multiple cultures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Undergrad Dean</li> <li>Service Learning</li> </ul>	Engage with a diverse community of experiential learning partners.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Completed audit of existing experiential learning partners to understand and its breadth and reach.</li> <li>○ Following audit, recommend various new partners that will help build diversity in partners</li> <li>○ Develop strategies for the experiential learning team to engage with diverse partners</li> </ul>	
<b>4) Appoint a DEI Faculty Fellow.</b>	1) Create, develop, recruit, hire and implement the position.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provost</li> </ul>	Recruit DEI Fellow.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Professor Emily Obuya appointed fall of 2022 and renewed commitment for the 2023-24 academic year</li> </ul>	

## Priority 2: Increasing access and success for under-represented and marginalized populations.

Goal	Strategy	Partner Office(s)	Year 1 Measure	Results/Updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Holding/Further Consideration
<b>1) Provide trainings for campus members who work with students from underrepresented and marginalized populations</b>	1) Offer comprehensive training and professional development program that balances foundational learning and exploration of DEI principles.	• Student Life	Help bridge 1+ opportunity for Public Safety to engage with students.	✓ Faculty & Staff Trainings: 6 (Kaplan, Pride Center, Obuya, Allen, Montgomery, ADA Compliance) ✓ Student Leaders Training: 6 (3 RA Training, 3 Advocacy Training) ■ Public Safety Training: 0 (UHA provides their own mandatory trainings but will be attending their kick off meeting in July)	
	2) Host an annual DEI workshop for all college employees.		Participant evaluation and feedback.	✓ Done (See Above)	
<b>2) Educate community members about the values and strengths of students from underrepresented and marginalized populations.</b>	1) Create a campaign that highlights community members up by telling their stories through digital and/or print mediums.	• Communications	Develop campaigns based on underrepresented populations.	✓ Black Excellence Digital Campaign: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 23% of all IG followers reached and an average of 7% engaged</li> <li>• 8% of all Facebook audience reached with an average of 2.8% reaction rate</li> </ul> ○ Will continue to use Heritage Months as a vehicle to profile members from underrepresented and marginalized populations	
	2) Host events on campus that center DEI as a way to connect with peers and learn.	• DEI Coalition • Student Life • Provost	Survey students in the fall to inquire about interests in programming.	✓ 7 Critical Conversation Programs in partnership with RSC201 ✓ Series of heritage month activities	



## Priority 3: Continuously build upon a campus climate where everyone feels welcome, supported, included, and valued.

Goal	Strategy	Partner Office(s)	Year 1 Measure	Results/Updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Holding/Further Consideration
<b>1) Create an Institution of Belonging.</b>	1) Develop a webpage that includes the college's DEI mission and vision, DEI definitions, bias reporting procedures, the DEI strategic plan and other relevant resources.	• Communications	Create and edit webpage promote the webpage on social media.	✓ Webpage Updated 11.1.22 ✓ Reporting links included and updated ○ Still need to add definitions ✓ This academic year there have 1,698 Page Views and 800 Unique Users at an average of 0:41 seconds spent on page.	
	2) Disseminate information about DEI training and resources.	• DEI Coalition • Communications • CTL	N/A Will be measured by an increase of .325% on the sense of belonging section on the CECE survey by 2025.	✓ 5 Trainings for DEI Coalition Members ○ For Next Year: increase advertising of training & resources	
	3) Engage commuter students or students that take classes remotely.		The addition of commuter and/or remote student on DEI Coalition.	✓ Commuter student serves on Coalition	
<b>2) Coordinate DEI reporting across all RSC to keep progress prominent.</b>	1) Develop a written and visual annual DEI report that addresses progress within each priority of the plan.	• Communications	Completed annual report by June 2023.	✓ Year 1 annual report complete	
	2) President will update the college community on DEI progress annually.		Delivered comments.	✓ President delivered comments Opening Day ✓ President delivered comments closing programs ✓ President note in annual report	
	3) Assemble the climate study group to conduct the next climate study in academic year 2024-2025.	• DEI Coalition	Climate Study plan by Fall of 2024.	■ Hold for Fall of 2024	
<b>3) Provide a range of DEI learning opportunities in various formats.</b>	1) Provide and assess multiple informal and formal opportunities for information sharing, learning and processing (Critical Conversations, Advocacy, Social Justice Scholars, Heritage celebrations, speaker series, etc.)		Program implementation and evaluations.	✓ Of the nearly 130 responses received by participants, all question areas achieved a "good" or higher rating 80% or more each time. ✓ Social Justice Scholars visited to NYS Museum Archives ✓ Social Justice Scholars presented at Research Day ✓ 3 of 3 Student Advocacy Trainings have happened ✓ 5 Heritage Month activities occurred	
	2) Create a calendar that will also include best practices that acknowledge the multiple religious and cultural holidays.		Complete and incorporate calendar across the college community.	✓ Calendar created ✓ Calendar shared with faculty to consider for the next year	
	3) Identify and build a robust network of external community partners that can support the college with DEI and social justice initiatives.		Partner with 10 organizations annually.	✓ 15 Partnerships Occurred: Schenectady School District; Schenectady Community Ministry; Iroquois Museum; Fulton County Historical Society; Palace Theatre; Center for Law and Justice; Business for Good; Albany Black Chamber of Commerce; Pride Center of the Capital District; In Our Own Voices; Intercultural Cafe, Troy; NYS Museum; Black Nurses Coalition; Albany Med; Albany Leadership Charter School for Girls.	

## Priority 4: Attract, recruit, support and develop a diverse community inclusive of faculty, staff, under- graduate students and graduate students.

Goal	Strategy	Partner Office(s)	Year 1 Measure	Results/Updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Holding/Further Consideration
<b>1) Increase the retention rate of underrepresented students by 1% to 3% percent within three years.</b>	1) Establish a Men of Color program	• Provost • Advancement	Create, develop and secure funding for program.	✓ Program proposal completed ○ Seeking \$10K in grant funding Fall of 2023	
	2) Create a Dialogue on Diversity series which is a platform that allows for conversations between students, faculty and staff on DEI.		Create a plan to secure funding for program.	○ Social Justice Scholars research project culminated in recommendations for creating a platform for DEI conversations	
<b>2) Coordinate, with the Office of Human Resources, an equitable recruitment process and hiring practices to increase and retain diverse hires.</b>	1) Adopt the Search Advocate Model	• HR • Provost	15 employees trained annually.	○ 10 of 15 Trained Employees	
	2) Review job descriptions to ensure descriptions are standardized and unbiased.	• HR	Create a committee to review job descriptions or train an employee in HR.	■ Will work with new HR Director in 2023-24	
	3) Hire a consultant to complete HR assessment.	• HR	Hire consultant.	■ CANCEL this strategy based on budget restrictions	
	4) Advertise in diversity publications, on diverse job boards and educational/professional conferences or organizations, etc.	• HR	Review all advertisements for placements.	■ Will work with new HR Director in 2023-24	
	5) Support the Office of Human Resources to conduct exit interviews	• HR	Ensure we are conducting exit interviews with departing employees.	■ Will work with new HR Director in 2023-24	
	6) Conduct stay interviews with employees to ensure they feel included and have a sense of belonging in their position and department.	• HR	Research and develop stay interview schedule and process.	■ Will work with new HR Director in 2023-24	



## Priority 5: Develop an institutional infrastructure to drive change.

Goal	Strategy	Partner Office(s)	Year 1 Measure	Results/Updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Holding/Further Consideration
<b>1) Identify and distribute new and existing funding sources to support DEI programming and capacity.</b>	1) Collaborate with Institutional Advancement to identify fiscal support.	• Institutional Advancement	Track dollars raised in support of DEI by June 30.	✓ Will request \$100K renewal in DEI program funding ✓ Received \$150K for ICAN ✓ Secured \$5K from NYSED for trainings ✓ Grant submitted for ICAN for additional \$150K	
	2) Allocate funding to support cultural competence in research and teaching activities.	• Provost	Ensure budget allocation.	✓ Provost sponsored 7-week Community Faculty Group: Exploring Intercultural Perspectives & Social Identity and renewed for 2023-24	
<b>2) Develop a Center for Diversity on both campuses.</b>	1) Hire an additional DEI employee.	• President	Person is hired, onboarded and performing at an excellent/outstanding level.	■ Hold on DEI Personnel	
	2) Survey and evaluate the DEI Coalition's composition and function to increase effectiveness.		Create and implement DEI Coalition growth plan, recruit new members and reward existing members.	✓ 21 active members ✓ Faculty DEI Liaison approved for 2023-24	
	3) Evaluate existing programs in student life as they pertain to DEI.* <i>*This strategy is contingent on additional personnel, as per plan.</i>	• Student Life	Determine how many programs will be needed and execute.	■ VP of Student Life requires areas to have an annual DEI goal associated with systems, policies, and procedures that impact the function and operation of the Student Life department.	
<b>3) Enhance accessibility and inclusive spaces.</b>	1) Incorporate the principles of UDL when evaluating and improving spaces.	• Cabinet	ADA compliance.	✓ Space study provides remedy to help achieve greater accessibility	
	2) Identify spaces on each campus and remedy spaces and/or services to increase access.	• Cabinet	Set multi-year goals based on report.	✓ Space study provides remedy to help achieve greater accessibility	
	3) Participate in Space Utilization committee meetings.	• Cabinet	Space Utilization committee to contribute and ensure that DEI objectives are considered.	✓ Space study provides remedy to help achieve greater accessibility	
	4) Provide a series of programs or workshops for faculty and staff that deepen their understanding for working with people with disabilities.	• Wellness and Accessibility	Program evaluations and improved feedback from the next climate study.	✓ Supporting Students with Disabilities: ADA & Section 504 of the American with Disabilities Act	
	5) Extend the availability of Accessibility services.		The Accessibility Office is open when students need it.	✓ Solutions Desk has allowed the Accessibility Office to provide expanded hours	
	6) Develop ways students can benefit from the government program Access-VR (Vocational Rehabilitation).		ROI based greater access to accommodations.	■ HOLD for 2023-24	

## Priority 5: Develop an institutional infrastructure to drive change.

Goal	Strategy	Partner Office(s)	Year 1 Measure	Results/Updates	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Complete <input type="checkbox"/> In Progress <input type="checkbox"/> Holding/Further Consideration
<b>4) Assure that college systems, policies and procedures promote equity, facilitate diversity goals, improve clarity, provide transparency and enhance accountability.</b>	1) Convene a working group dedicated to the audit of institutional policies and practices for alignment with diversity strategic priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finance</li> <li>• Student Life</li> <li>• Institutional Advancement</li> <li>• Provost/Dean</li> <li>• Enrollment</li> <li>• Title IX</li> </ul>	Working group provides report to community in 2024-25.	<input type="checkbox"/> Group began meeting bi-weekly in Spring of 2023 and has begun prioritizing assessment of institutional policies and practices	
	2) Conduct unit-level DEI assessment with each department of the college.		Collect and compile program survey generating qualitative and quantitative data by 2024-25.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Met with all faculty departments in 2022-23 <input type="checkbox"/> Will meet with staff departments in 2023-24	
<b>5) Create a Bias Response Team to support the college's strategy for achieving an inclusive campus climate.</b>	1) Create the policy and procedures of the Bias Response Team.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provost</li> <li>• Student Life</li> <li>• President</li> </ul>	Completion of policy and procedure.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Response Team Members Identified and Confirmed <input type="checkbox"/> Draft procedure by Fall 2023 which is necessary to meet Middle States Standards	
	2) Convene team to meet to review reports and make findings and recommendations in tandem with the director of EEOC and Title IX.		Develop framework and reporting system.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Team assembled <input type="checkbox"/> Budget for training in 2023-24	





Inspired to give your time, talent, and/or treasure  
to the DEI efforts of Russell Sage College?

Contact Geoff Miller at [milleg3@sage.edu](mailto:milleg3@sage.edu)  
or 518-244-4720 and let him know!





**2022-23 | Russell Sage College**  
**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**  
**Strategic Plan Progress Report | YEAR 1 OF 3**